

Fiscal Services Division
Legislative Services Agency
Fiscal Note

SF 2346 – Graduated Driver Licensing (LSB 6506 SV)

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Fiscal Note Version – New

Description

Senate File 2346 makes numerous changes relating to driver education, graduated driver licensing, and passenger restraint. Specifically, the Bill:

- Amends classroom instruction to include an increase in the hours of instruction concerning substance abuse from four hours to 12 hours, and instruction on cell phone use and other driver distractions.
- Requires drivers under 18 or 21 years of age who commit motor vehicle violations under Chapters 321 and 321J, Code of Iowa, to complete an “Alive at 25” course developed by the National Safety Council or an equivalent course approved by the Department of Transportation (DOT). The course is in addition to any other penalty, sanction, or educational requirement.
- Increases the amount of supervised driving experience that a driver between 14 and 18 years of age must accumulate to qualify for an intermediate license, and increases the amount of supervised driving experience that a 17-year-old intermediate licensee must accumulate to qualify for a full driver's license.
- Requires that passengers who are at least six but less than 18 years of age be secured by a child restraint system or by a safety belt or safety harness, regardless of the seating position, in any motor vehicle other than a school bus or motorcycle. In addition, the Bill requires that all passengers 18 years of age or older use a safety belt or safety harness, regardless of the seating position, when riding in a vehicle operated by an intermediate licensee. A violation of the seat belt or child restraint law is a simple misdemeanor punishable by a scheduled fine of \$25.
- Directs the DOT and the Department of Public Safety (DPS), in consultation with interested organizations, to establish a study committee to review Iowa law concerning driver licensing provisions affecting young drivers, including special minor's (school) licenses and driver education. The committee is to make recommendations to the General Assembly by December 31, 2006.

Assumptions

1. According to the Justice Data Warehouse:
 - In December 2005, there were 49,604 drivers with graduated licenses.
 - In FY 2005, there were 442 violations of graduated driver's license provisions.
 - In FY 2005, 19,982 drivers under 18 years of age committed motor vehicle violations under Chapter 321, Code of Iowa, and 1,753 drivers under 21 years of age committed violations under Chapter 321J, Code of Iowa, relating to driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
2. Amending the provisions for seat belt use will likely increase the number of violations under the proposed bill.
3. The National Safety Council describes “Alive at 25” as a four-hour interactive program that teaches drivers between the ages of 16 and 24 responsible driving behavior and defensive driving techniques. Instructors of the course must be certified.

4. In most states, the cost is higher for participants who are mandated to complete the course.
5. The Bill does not specify the agency or organization that would provide the “Alive at 25” or equivalent course.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact of SF 2346 cannot be determined due to insufficient information; however, the following information is provided:

High Schools – Increased Classroom Instruction

The fiscal impact associated with requiring additional hours for instruction on substance abuse is unknown. Currently, 30 hours of classroom instruction are required, of which six or more hours are for laboratory instruction (of which three hours include street or highway driving), a minimum of four hours is for instruction on substance abuse, a minimum of 20 minutes on railroad crossing safety, and an unspecified number of minutes or hours on organ donation. Under the proposed Bill, an additional eight hours will be required for substance abuse instruction. It is unknown if classroom hours will be added to the current 30 hours, or whether the current hours will be adjusted. High schools that provide driver’s education may realize a fiscal impact if the hours of instruction are increased.

Scheduled Fines

The fiscal impact cannot be determined since the number of violations under the proposed Bill is unknown. Amending the provisions for seat belt use will likely increase the number of violations, and will therefore result in an increase in the amount collected. A violation of the seat belt or child restraint law is a simple misdemeanor punishable by a scheduled fine of \$25.

“Alive at 25” Course

The number of driver’s that will be required to complete the “Alive at 25” course is unknown. In FY 2005, an estimated 22,000 persons committed violations under Chapters 321 and 321J, Code of Iowa. All such individuals would be required to complete the course under the proposed legislation.

Costs associated with certification and materials are detailed below. Members of the National Safety Council are charged less for materials:

- Visual Aids: \$375 members / \$500 non-members
- Instructor Certification Package: \$100 members / \$130 non-members
- Instructor Manual: \$45 members / \$55 non-members
- Annual Instructor Recertification: \$45 members and non-members
- Course Guide: \$3.25 members / \$4.25 non-members

The Bill does not specify the cost to participants to complete the “Alive at 25” course. In other states, the cost ranges from \$30 to \$70, depending on voluntary or mandatory (court-ordered) participation. In most states, the cost is higher for participants who are mandated to complete the course.

The Department of Transportation estimates the cost of approving the “Alive at 25” or equivalent course to be minimal.

Graduated Driver's License Study

Costs to the DOT and the DPS associated with establishing a study committee to review Iowa law concerning driver licensing provisions affecting young drivers are anticipated to be minimal.

Sources

Department of Transportation

Department of Human Rights, Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning Division (CJJPD)

National Safety Council

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

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The fiscal note and correctional impact statement for this bill was prepared pursuant to Joint Rule 17 and pursuant to Section 2.56, Code of Iowa. Data used in developing this fiscal note and correctional impact statement are available from the Fiscal Services Division, Legislative Services Agency to members of the Legislature upon request.
